Fourth World Conference on **Women**

Beijing, China · 4-15 September 1995

FACT SHEET, SEPTEMBER 1993

What: The Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace

Where: Beijing International Convention Center, Beijing, China

When: 4-15 September 1995

Why: To review and appraise the advancement of women since 1985 in terms of the objectives of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000.

To mobilize women and men at both the policy-making and grass roots levels to achieve those objectives.

To adopt a "Platform for Action", concentrating on some of the key issues identified as representing a fundamental obstacle to the advancement of the majority of women in the world. It will include elements relative to awareness-raising, decision-making, literacy, poverty, health, violence, national machinery, refugees and technology.

To determine the priorities to be followed in 1996-2001 for implementation of the Strategies within the United Nations system.

Who: The Conference has been convened by the United Nations General Assembly, with the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women serving as the Preparatory Committee. This intergovernmental body, representing 45 United Nations Member States, meets annually to formulate guidelines on actions to improve women's status in the economic, political, social, cultural and educational fields.

Gertrude Mongella (United Republic of Tanzania) has been appointed Secretary-General of the Conference. Her office and the Conference secretariat, which is responsible for organizing the Conference and preparing its documents, are located at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

Conference participants and observers will include Governments; organizations of the United Nations system; intergovernmental organizations; national liberation movements recognized by the Organization of African Unity; non-governmental organizations; experts and professional associations.

United Nations

For further information, contact: Department of Public Information, United Nations, Room S-1040, New York, NY 10017, USA. Tel: 212/963-1262. Fax: 212/963-4556

CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS:

- draft Platform for Action
- a report of the Secretary-General on the second review and appraisal of the implementation of the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000
- 1994 World Survey on the Role of Women in Development
- updated edition of The World's Women 1970-1990: Trends and Statistics
- outcome of regional preparatory meetings for the Fourth World Conference
- updated compendium on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
- national reports to be prepared by Governments as a basis for future national action

CONFERENCE BACKGROUND:

There have been three United Nations world conferences on women. The first conference, held during International Women's Year in Mexico City, 1975, led to the declaration by the United Nations General Assembly of the United Nations Decade for Women (1976-85). At the second conference, held in Copenhagen in 1980, participants adopted a Programme of Action for the Second Half of the United Nations Decade for Women. The third conference, which took place in Nairobi, 1985, at the end of the Decade, adopted the Nairobi Forward-looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women to the Year 2000. The Strategies provide a framework for action at the national, regional and international levels to promote greater equality and opportunity for women. They are based on the three objectives of the United Nations Decade for Women–equality, development and peace.

HOW NON-GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS CAN PARTICIPATE:

In the Conference:

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) are encouraged to participate in the World Conference itself, in the parallel forum to be organized by NGOs and in preparatory activities at the regional and national levels. Organizations having consultative status with the Economic and Social Council will automatically be eligible to attend. For information on consultative status, contact the NGO Unit, DC-2 Room 2338, United Nations, NY, NY 10017, USA, tel. 212/963-4663. Organizations wishing to apply for that status in time for the Conference should do so as soon as possible.

NGOs that do not have consultative status but which participate in regional preparatory activities and/or regional meetings will be eligible to apply for participation in the Conference. Governments have also been invited to include NGOs in their delegations. For information on regional activities, contact the respective focal point listed below.

In the NGO Forum:

An NGO Forum will be held in Beijing, 30 August - 8 September, at the Beijing Workers' Sports Service Center. Open to all interested women and men, it is being planned and organized by an NGO Forum Facilitating Committee established by the Conference of NGOs in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (CONGO), under the direction of a 60-member NGO Forum Planning Committee. The Planning Committee, through its representatives in Geneva, New York and Vienna, is organizing three pre-conference consultations in 1993-1995, regional meetings in conjunction with the United Nations regional preparatory conferences, and the Forum itself.

In regional preparatory activities:
NGOs can bring their issues to the forefront by participating in a series of meetings planned to take place at the time of the United Nations regional preparatory conferences. Those meetings will assess the key issues for women on a regional basis and ultimately provide input for regional reports to be considered at the Conference.

The representatives of the Planning Committee, and the focal points for regional activities, are as follows:

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PREPARATORY PROCESS:
Prior to the Conference a number of meetings are taking place at the national, regional and international levels, organized by NGOs as well as by the United Nations.

Following is a preliminary calendar, which also includes other major United Nations conferences:

1993

16-20 November, Manila, Philippines	Asian Regional NGO Symposium
22-27 November, Kampala, Uganda	Regional Conference on Women and Peace

1994

10-14 January, New York	Commission on the Status of Women, inter-sessional meeting on draft Platform for Action
17 January - 4 February, New York	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
February or May, Tunisia	Regional Expert Group Meeting on African Plan of Action
3-4 March, New York	18th Inter-Agency Meeting on Women
3-18 March, New York	NGO consultations and meetings
7-18 March, New York	Commission on the Status of Women, 38th session
April	ILO International Forum on Equality for Women in a Changing World: Challenges for the Future
7-14 June, Jakarta, Indonesia	Asian and Pacific Regional Preparatory Conference
1-6 August, Turku, Finland	Nordic Forum
4-8 September, Amman, Jordan	Regional Expert Group Meeting on Women and Development (Western Asia)
5-13 September, Cairo, Egypt	International Conference on Population and Development
19-23 September, Mar del Plata, Argentina	Regional NGO Forum for Latin America and the Caribbean
26-30 September, Buenos Aires, Argentina	Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Conference
Early October, Vienna	European Regional Preparatory Conference
6-10 November, Amman, Jordan	Western Asian Regional Preparatory Conference
Mid-November, Dakar, Senegal	African Regional Preparatory Conference
Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic	INSTRAW Interregional Conference on Women, Environment & Health

1995

Early 1995	Committee on Equality between Women and Men, Council of Europe, "Equality and Democracy"
January	Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
February	UNESCO Seminar on "Women and the Media"
6-12 March, Copenhagen, Denmark	World Summit for Social Development
9-10 March, New York	19th Inter-Agency Meeting on Women
9-24 March, New York	NGO consultations and meetings
13-24 March, New York	Commission on the Status of Women, 39th session
30 August-8 September, Beijing	NGO Forum
4-15 September, Beijing	Fourth World Conference on Women

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